

LIFESTYLE FEATURE

Home and Peace

by William Kissel

July 15, 2005



Using the ancient architectural secrets of Vedic design, you could possibly transform your house into a holistic home.

Len Oppenheim considers himself a skeptic. So the Wall Street trader can't say with any certainty whether his headaches came to an end simply because he and his wife, Dena, moved from the suburbs of San Francisco to a rural farmhouse near Fairfield, Iowa. Or if his health improved due to the fact that the house on 14 rolling acres was built following the architectural guidelines of an ancient Sanskrit text called Sthapatya Veda, which suggests there's a correlation between human harmony and the orientation, spatial, and material elements of one's home.

"How much of it is a self-fulfilling prophecy, I really can't say. All I can tell you is [that I find] I sleep better and wake with more energy," says Oppenheim, adding that a new sense of calmness has come over him in business, too. "I still have my ups and downs in the [stock] market," he says. "But I seem to find that the setbacks don't affect my mood as much."

Oppenheim's experience doesn't surprise Jonathan Lipman, AIA, chief architect of Maharishi Global Construction (MGC), the Iowa-based company that designed and built the Oppenheim's 7,000-square-foot Sthapatya Veda, or simply Vedic, home, along with hundreds of others across the nation. "Every architect has had the experience that some buildings foster quality of life and others seem to be failures not